

HF Happenings

456

South African Radio League 1925 - 2010 Suid-Afrikaanse Radioliga
Member Society of the International Amateur Radio Union Region 1
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22 May - ZS4 Sprint

25 May - SARL 80 m Club Contest, CW

29 May - SARL Digital Contest

Find the rules in the 2011 SARL Contest Manual

Papers for the 22nd IARU Region 1 General Conference

The 22nd General Conference of Region 1 takes place from 12 to 19 August 2011 at the Cabanas Hotel at Sun City in the North West province.

The papers to be discussed in Committee C2 (Credentials and Finance Committee); C3 (General Administrative and Organisational Committee), C4 (permanent HF Committee) and C5 (permanent VHF/UHF/Microwaves Committee) can be downloaded from the Region 1 web site at <http://www.iaru-r1.org>, click on Documents and then on Conference. The documents are also available at <http://www.iaru2011.org.za/ConferencePapers.htm>.

Yes, there is a Committee C1 (Steering Committee) and a Committee C6 (Election and Ballot Committee)

Amateur Radio Hearing Aids

Ward, NØAX

I wear hearing aids in both ears and have for nearly twenty years - even during contests! Here are a few tips and thoughts on hearing aids that might be of interest to those of you who need a little help with your hearing or who are not getting any younger and thinking about it. Bear in mind that my hearing loss is basically a high-frequency roll-off above a couple of kHz. Your specific need should be evaluated by a professional and may have stronger bearing on what type of hearing aid you need than the following topics.

Digital or Analogue? There is not even a question - get digital aids. They use similar signal processing to what we have in our radios, with similar effects on the audio output. This is now the dominant technology and rapidly replacing analogue instruments. Your main questions will be about the signal processing features of the signal processing, discussed below. Digital aids act as a multi-band graphic equalizer, very similar to those used in audio systems. In addition, the digital aid will have several "programs" that set up the aid's features in different ways for

What have you done today for Amateur Radio to make you proud?





May 2011

1 – Worker's Day; **ZS3 Sprint**
2 – Public holiday
7 - RTA, Cape Town
8 – Mother's Day
7 and 8 - Antique Wireless Association Valve QSO Party; 10-10 International Spring Digital Contest
14 and 15 - VOLTA WW RTTY Contest
19 - Radio Amateur Examination
20 to 22 - Dayton Hamvention® 2011
21 and 22 - His Majesty the King of Spain CW Contest; Baltic Contest
22 - ZS4 Sprint
25 - SARL 80 m Club Contest, CW; Africa Day
28 and 29 - CQ WW WPX CW Contest
29 - SARL Digital Contest; Comrades Marathon - Durban to Pietermaritzburg

June 2011

1 - International Children's Day
2 - Ascension Day
4 - RTA, Port Elizabeth
5 - World Environmental Day
11 - Portugal Day Contest
12 - Pentecost
16 – Youth Day; SARL Youth Day Sprint
17 - World QRP Day; School holiday
18 - Programming in Windows, Gauteng
18 and 19 - All Asian DX CW Contest
19 - Fathers' day
23 to 27 - SARL Top Band QSO Party
24 - Schools close
24 to 26 - Ham Radio 2011, Friedrichshafen, Germany
25 and 26 - ARRL Field Day

different environments. The hearing aid technician will explain this to you in detail. It would be a good idea to make it known that you have some technical background so the discussion can take advantage of your expertise.

Behind the ear or In the ear? I started with behind-the-ear aids because at the time, the smaller in-the-ear aids were too expensive. This has changed, with the new "open ear" style offering many features without the moulded housing that goes in the ear canal. I have tried the open-ear style and I do like the sound quality. I changed to in-the-ear aids, however, because placement of the microphone in behind-the-ear aids tends to skew its pattern to above, behind and to the side of the listener. This may not help with face-to-face conversation and dead-ahead audio sources, such as TV. In-the-ear aids can take advantage of the natural focusing provided by the external ear. Behind-the-ear microphones also do not help as much with most telephone handsets - you have to learn to hold a cell phone farther back so that the speaker is closer to the aid's microphone, for example.

Behind-the-ear aids are also generally quite uncomfortable with earmuff-style headphones that many of us prefer in the radio shack - if they can be worn under earmuffs at all. If you have to take the aids out when wearing headphones, they cannot help you with receiver audio. So I wear a mid-sized, in-the-ear aid that has worked out well. Many vendors will let you try open-ear-style aids as way of finding out what features and settings you like whether you buy behind the ear or in-the-ear aids.

Signal Processing. The first component of audio processing you will notice is compression or AGC. Compression is good in a hearing aid because it prevents overload and distortion. The price is somewhat increased background noise. In addition, if you are using the aids with a radio the two AGC systems - one in the radio and one in the aid - increase the amount of compression and the interacting time constants of the compressors can actually hurt intelligibility of the received audio. You will also notice that just like an amateur radio receiver's DSP, some of the features of the hearing aid will colour the audio in perceptible ways. For example, feedback cancellation is a nice feature but it will also try to get rid of single-tone signals like CW! The effects of noise reduction in the hearing aid are also similar to a receiver's DSP. You get used to them and the benefit of reducing noise generally outweighs the presence of artefacts. This is where the different programs of the digital aids





become really handy.

While the advanced features are great in normal conversation, they get in the way when on the radio, so be sure to have one program in which compression is turned off along with feedback cancellation and other artefact-inducing features. Say to the technician, "I want one program that only has gain and frequency response correction." If you have enough programs, you might even want to try to set one up for CW and one for voice! It would be a good idea to take an audio player with recorded CW and voice signals to use, as the aids are set up for you. The gain-and-frequency response program has also turned out to be the right one for me to use when I am listening to music, as well.

Selecting a Vendor. There are number of good hearing aid companies and the mid-range to high-end hearing aids are all very good. I initially selected independent local hearing aid companies with good prices and excellent service, but both struggled and were eventually purchased by a national manufacturer. My current set of aids is of a national brand with offices in shopping malls around the country. Because I travel frequently, I like knowing an office is probably handy and I have had to get a microphone port unplugged while on the road. Your circumstances will dictate your choice but I strongly recommend making service after the sale a primary evaluation criterion.

Do I Need Them? How can you tell if you need a hearing aid? Ask your family for their honest opinion and then listen to what they tell you. "Green-bar guys" are an industry legend, referring to the volume control on the TV that they are always turning up and up and up. Meanwhile, they insist that their hearing is just fine and why does everybody mumble? If you're not hearing the phone, if you can hear someone talking but can't understand what they say, if the pileups all sound like mush - you probably need help with your hearing. One way to experiment before trying a hearing aid is a pocket graphic equalizer, such as the Koss three-band Portable Stereo Equalizers that can be found on the Internet for about \$20. Wire it up to your radio or audio player and experiment with the settings. You may find that a little boost on the high frequency channel or dropping the low frequencies helps or maybe just some additional gain is what you need. The cost is low and you will learn something without having to make an office visit.

Summary All of us are getting older and hearing often takes a hit on the way. Younger amateur radios that have grown-up with ear-buds cranked up to 11 are discovering that those fragile hair cells of the cochlea have worn out early. Meanwhile, the perceived stigma of wearing hearing aids is largely non-existent as people are wearing headphones and earpieces everywhere you look. Good hearing matters not only on the radio but in our personal lives, too, especially to the people around you. Take advantage of what is becoming ubiquitous technology to restore your hearing.

Operating Tip - Clean audio saves time!

Tip #1 - the power meter needle should move in sync with your voice peaks, not go to maximum and stay there because you have the processor maxed out.

Tip #2 - yelling makes things worse.

Tip #3 - clean audio will cut your QSO time by two-thirds. Why? Because not everything has to be repeated and your call sign gets through correctly, more often on the first call. Higher average power does not also mean higher intelligibility - too often quite the opposite!

TAPR Digital Journal

The latest TAPR Digital Journal is available for download. The Spring 2011 issue of the TAPR Digital Journal is available at www.tapr.org/psr/psr115.pdf. The Winter 2011 issue is at www.tapr.org/psr/psr114.pdf and the Autumn 2010 issue at www.tapr.org/psr/psr113.pdf





Six and Ten Reporting Club - February 2011 report

The latest report from Martin Harrison, G3USF, and the Six and Ten Reporting Club has just been published and is now available on the web.

The Six and Ten Reporting Club is an informal group of radio amateurs, mostly from the UK, who are interested in propagation studies at frequencies around the HF-VHF boundary (mainly the 6 and 10 metre amateur bands).

The club produces a monthly newsletter (the Six and Ten Report) that includes analysis of 28 MHz propagation based on beacon monitoring, analysis of 50 MHz activity reports broken down by propagation mode, reports and discussions on unusual propagation events, compilations of solar and geomagnetic data, lists of activity world-wide, beacon news, and results of on-going experiments.

The Report is usually published on this site about 5 - 6 weeks after the end of the month, <http://q7kse.co.uk/6and10/>

The Six and Ten Report is edited and produced by Steve Reed, GOAEV, and Martin Harrison, G3USF, and is an activity of the Radio Society of Great Britain's Propagation Studies Committee. The Committee's website carries a comprehensive set of links to introductions to propagation, near real-time current conditions, solar/geophysical information and propagation prediction programs. Links for those interested in beacons as propagation indicators: [The NCDXF/IARU International Beacon Network for details on the superb global 5-band 24-beacon network](#), [HF Beacons](#) and [6 m Beacons](#).

DXCC News

Bill Moore, NC1L, ARRL Awards Branch manager reports that the following operation is approved for DXCC credit:

VU4PB - Andaman & Nicobar Island, 2011 Operation.
(Thank you Tjerk, ZS6P)

African DX

Cameroon, TJ. Henri, TJ3AY, is currently active as TJ3IC until 30 May 2011 to commemorate the 51st anniversary of the independence of Cameroon. Expect Henri to be active on all HF bands. A special QSL card is available via F5LGE, direct or bureau.

Tunisia, 3V. SWL Ashraf "Ash," 3V4-002 (KF5EYY), will be active as 3V8SS from the "Radio Club Station of Tunisian Scouts" in Sousse, during the CQ WW WPX CW Contest (28 and 29 May) as a Single-Op/All-Band/Low-Power entry. QSL via LoTW. Read about Ashraf on the following Web page at <http://www.qsl.net/3v4-002>

Tanzania, 5H. Dave, WOFBI, will be active as 5H2DCL for the next two months. He is there as a medical doctor. Activity will be mostly on 20 meters CW, usually after 13:00 UTC. QSL via W0W0I.

9Q500N LoTW update. The 9Q500N crew reports that 31 966 QSOs have been uploaded to LoTW. They state, "These are indeed more QSOs than originally made. This is because the QSOs made by Patrick back in July are also uploaded in LoTW and some call sign corrections





that were made. From these 31 966 QSOs more than 40% have been confirmed. This indicates that more and more better DXers are using LoTW! Still and 100 envelopes are received every month. The next wave will be the conformation of the bureau QSLs."

African Islands on the Air

Madeira Island. Operators Ivan, OE1DIA, Jozef, OM3GI, Tibi, OM3RM, and Julo, OM7JG, will be active as CR3A from Funchal, Madeira Island (IOTA AF-014, DIP MD-001, DPRN FF-101, WFF CTFF-030, WLOTA 0053), as a Multi-Single entry in the CQ WW WPX CW Contest (28 - 29 May). The callsign CR3A belongs to the CT3 Madeira Contest Team. QSL CR3A via CT3EE, direct, also LoTW (see QRZ.com).

Seychelles, S7. David, S79DF is active from Saint Anne Island, IOTA AF-024, for several months. He is active generally in his spare time on 20 metres, although he may be active on 17 to 10 metres soon. QSL via IV3TDM.

Special Event

Israel, 4X. Special event stations 4X13AR and 4Z13AR are active until 26 May during the Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Master Competition. Activity is on 80 to 10 metres using CW, SSB and RTTY. QSL via 4Z5NS.

Portugal. Some members of the "Algarve STAR DX Team" will be active as CR55PQ from 21 to 23 May celebrating the 55th anniversary of the Para-Quedistas military school. This is also the QTH of the station. Miguel, CT1EHX, Toze, CT1GFK, and Mike, CT1IUA, will be active on CW, SSB and RTTY on 80 - 6 m. QSL via bureau or direct to CT1EHX. See also <http://algarvedx.com>

CS2HD will be active from the international Harley Davidson meeting in Tavira from 23 to 29 May. QSL via CT2FPE.

Contest Calendar

This week's contests compiled by Bruce Horn, WA7BNM. The period covered is 16 to 23 May 2011.

Run for the Bacon QRP Contest

01:00 - 03:00 UTC 16 May

Mode: CW

Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 m

Classes: Single Band; All Band

Max power: 5 watts

Exchange: RST, state, province or country and member no or power

Work stations: Once per band

QSO Points: 1 point per QSO with non-member; 3 points per QSO with member on same continent; 5 points per QSO with member on different continent

Multipliers: Each state, province or country once; Multiply mults by 2 if >50 members worked

Score Calculation: Total score = total QSO points x total mults

Submit logs by: 22 May 2011

E-mail logs to: (none)

Upload log at:

<http://www.fqgrp.org/pigrun/autolog.php>

Mail logs to: (none)

Find rules at: <http://www.fqgrp.org/pigrun/>

NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint

00:30 - 02:30 UTC 19 May





Mode: CW
Bands: 80, 40, 20 m
Classes: (none)
Max power: 5 watts
Exchange: RST, state, province or country and NAQCC no or power
Work stations: Once per band
QSO Points: 1 point per QSO with non-member; 2 points per QSO with member
Multipliers: Each state, province or country once
Key Type Mult: 2 x if straight key, 1,5 x if bug, 1 x if other
Score Calculation: Total score = total QSO points x total mults x key type mult
Submit logs by: 23:59 UTC 22 May 2011
E-mail logs to:
naqcc33[at]windstream[dot]net
Upload log at:
<http://naqcc.n4lcd.com/sprintlog.html>
Mail logs to: John Shannon, K3WWP, 478 E. High St., Kittanning, PA 16201, USA
Find rules at:
<http://naqcc.info/sprint201105.html>

RSGB 80 m Club Championship, CW
19:00 - 20:30 UTC 19 May
Mode: CW
Bands: 80 m Only
Classes: (none)
Exchange: RST and serial no
QSO Points: 1 point per QSO
Multipliers: (none)
Score Calculation: (see rules)
Submit logs by: 23:59 UTC 26 May 2011
Upload log at:
<http://www.rsgbcc.org/cgi-bin/hfenter.pl>
Mail logs to: (none)
Find rules at:
<http://www.rsgbcc.org/hf/rules/2011/r80mc.c.shtml>

Feld Hell Sprint
15:00 - 17:00 UTC and 18:00 - 20:00 UTC 20 May
Mode: Feld Hell
Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 m
Classes: (none)

Max power: Standard: 100 watts; QRP: 5 watts
Exchange: (see rules)
Work stations: Once per band
QSO Points: (see rules)
Bonus Points: (see rules)
Multipliers: (see rules)
Score Calculation: (see rules)
Submit logs by: 1 June 2011
E-mail logs to: (none)
Post log summary at:
<http://sites.google.com/site/feldhellclub/Home/contests>
Mail logs to: (none)
Find rules at:
<http://sites.google.com/site/feldhellclub/Home/contests>

EU PSK DX Contest
12:00 UTC 21 May to 12:00 UTC 22 May
Mode: BPSK63
Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 m
Classes: Single Op All Band - high or low - 24 h or 12 h; Single Op Single Band - high or low; Multi-Single - young or old; Multi-Multi - young or old
Max power: HP: 100 watts; LP: 10 watts
Exchange: EU: RST and EU area code; non-EU: RST and QSO no
QSO Points: 1 point per QSO with same country; 2 points per QSO with different country, same continent; 3 points per QSO with different continent; non-EU Stations: 5 points per QSO with EU
Multipliers: Each DXCC country once per band
Each EU area code once per band
Score Calculation: Total score = total QSO points x total mults
Submit logs by: 6 June 2011
E-mail logs to: ut7fp[at]srars[dot]org
Mail logs to: (none)
Find rules at:
http://eu.srars.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=20&Itemid=48

His Majesty the King of Spain CW Contest
12:00 UTC 21 May to 12:00 UTC 22 May
Mode: CW
Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 m





Classes: Single Op All Band; Single Op Single Band; Multi-Op
Exchange: EA: RST and province; non-EA: RST and serial no
Work stations: Once per band
QSO Points: (see rules)
Multipliers: Each EA province once per band; Each EADX100 entity, except EA, EA6, EA8, EA9, once per band
Score Calculation: Total score = total QSO points x total mults
Submit logs by: 10 June 2011
E-mail logs to: smreycw[at]ure[dot]es
Mail logs to: URE HF Contests, PO Box 220, 28080 Madrid, Spain
Find rules at:
<http://www.ure.es/contest/431-sm-el-rey-contest-english-version.html>

UN DX Contest
12:00 UTC 21 May to 12:00 UTC 22 May
Mode: CW, SSB
Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 m
Classes: Single Op - CW, SSB or mixed - low or high; Single Op Single Band; Multi-Op Single Transmitter; SWL
Max power: HP: >100 watts; LP: 100 watts
Exchange: Kazakhstan: RS(T) and district code; non-Kazakhstan: RS(T) and QSO no
Work stations: Once per band per mode
QSO Points: 2 points per QSO with same country; 3 points per QSO with different country, same continent; 5 points per QSO with different continent; non-Kazakhstan: 10 points per QSO with Kazakhstan station
Multipliers: Each KDA district once per band; Each DXCC country once per band
Score Calculation: Total score = total QSO points x total mults
Submit logs by: 23 June 2011
E-mail logs to: HF_KFRR[at]MAIL[dot]RU
Mail logs to: UN DX Contest, PO Box 88, 010000 Astana, Kazakhstan
Find rules at:
<http://kw.cgun.kz/undxc-2011eng.html>

Aegean RTTY Contest
12:00 UTC 21 May to 12:00 UTC 22 May
Mode: RTTY

Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 m
Classes: Single Op; Multi-Op
Exchange: RST and QSO no
Work stations: Once per band
QSO Points: (see rules)
Multipliers: (none)
Score Calculation: Total score = total QSO points
Submit logs by: 15 June 2011
E-mail logs to: sv8cyr[at]gmail[dot]com
Mail logs to: Aegean RTTY Contest, PO Box 04, 83100 Samos Hellas, Greece
Find rules at:
<http://www.aegeandxgroup.gr/Aegean-RTTY-Contesr.php>

Baltic Contest
21:00 UTC 21 May to 02:00 UTC 22 May
Mode: CW, SSB
Bands: 80 m Only
Classes: Single Op CW/SSB; Single Op CW; Single Op SSB; Multi-Single; SWL
Exchange: RS(T) and serial no
Work stations: Once per mode
QSO Points: ES/YL/LY Stations: 1 point per QSO with EU; ES/YL/LY Stations: 2 points per QSO with non-EU; EU Stations: 10 points per QSO with ES/YL/LY; EU Stations: 1 point per QSO with non-EU; non-EU Stations: 20 points per QSO with ES/YL/LY; non-EU Stations: 1 point per QSO with non-ES/YL/LY
Multipliers: (none)
Score Calculation: Total score = total QSO points
Submit logs by: 1 July 2011
E-mail logs to: lrsf[at]lrsf[dot]lt
Mail logs to: Baltic Contest, PO Box 210, LT-44003 Kaunas, Lithuania
Find rules at:
http://www.lrsf.lt/bcontest/english/rules_html.htm

UA2 QSO Party
13:00 - 16:59 UTC 22 May
Mode: CW, SSB
Bands: 80, 40, 20 m
Classes: Single Op - CW, SSB or mixed; Multi-Single; Junior Multi-Single; SWL





Exchange: UA2: RS(T) and RDA ID; non-UA2: RS(T) and serial no
Work stations: Once per band per mode
QSO Points: 1 point per QSO with non-UA2 station; 5 points per QSO with UA2 station
Multipliers: (none)
Score Calculation: Total score = total QSO points

Submit logs by: 22 June 2011
E-mail logs to: ua2ff[at]qrz[dot]ru
Mail logs to: Dmitry Gorshkov, PO Box 73, Kaliningrad 236000, Russia
Find rules at:
<http://www.qrz.ru/contest/detail/382.html>

Next Week's Contests

SKCC Sprint , 00:00 - 02:00 UTC 25 May
CWops Mini-CWT Test, 13:00 - 14:00 UTC, 19:00 - 20:00 UTC 25 May and 03:00 - 04:00 UTC 26 May
NCCC Sprint Ladder, 02:30 - 03:00 UTC 27 May
CQ WW WPX Contest, CW, 00:00 UTC 28 May to 23:59 UTC 29 May
ARCI Hootowl Sprint, 20:00 local - 24:00 local 29 May
MI QRP Memorial Day CW Sprint, 23:00 UTC 29 May to 03:00 UTC 30 May

History This Week

A look back at events that made history this week - compiled by the Summerland Amateur Radio Club of Lismore, NSW and Dennis, ZS4BS. The week starting Monday 16 May 2011.

0218 - 7th recorded perihelion passage of Halley's Comet
1620 - First merry-go-round seen at a fair (Philippapolis, Turkey)
1819 - First bicycles (swift walkers) in US introduced in NYC
1830 - First railroad timetable published in newspaper (Baltimore American)
1851 - Amsterdam-Nieuwediep telegraph connection linked
1881 - World's first electric tram goes into service in Lichterfelder (near Berlin)
1891 - First motion picture shown to National Federation of Women's Clubs
1892 - Dr Washington Sheffield invents toothpaste tube
1892 - Charles Brady King invents pneumatic hammer
1906 - Wright Brothers patent an aeroplane
1918 - First electrically propelled warship (the New Mexico)
1964 - First nuclear-powered lighthouse begins operations (Chesapeake Bay)

Items used with acknowledgement to The ARRL Letter, Amateur Radio Newsline, OPDX Bulletin, 425 DX Bulletin, DXNL Bulletin, ARRL DX News, WIA-News, the RSGB News, Southgate ARC and Pete's DX Newsdesk.

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